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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

COE, SUSAN D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1654

DATE MAILED: 03/15/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/773,756

Applicant(s)

WEISER, MARK JAMES

Examiner

Susan Coe

Art Unit

1654

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 11-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14, 15 and 22-29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 11-13 and 16-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3-11-03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 11-29 are currently pending.

Election/Restrictions

2. Applicant's election of calcium carbonate for species A and animal urine for species B in the paper submitted January 16, 2004 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).
3. Claims 14, 15, and 22-29 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the paper submitted January 16, 2004.
4. Claims 11-13 and 16-21 are examined on the merits solely in regards to the elected species of calcium carbonate as the carrier and animal urine as the animal product.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 11-13, 16, 17, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

5. Claim 11 is indefinite because applicant has not defined the metes and bounds of "natural." For example, numerous products that occur in nature require some degree of human

Art Unit: 1654

processing prior to use; it is unclear if such products would or would not be considered “natural” in accordance with applicant’s claims.

6. Claim 13 is indefinite because the required amounts of the two ingredients adds up to more than 100%.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

7. Claims 11 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat. No. 5,043,425.

Applicant’s claims are drawn to a composition comprising animal urine and calcium carbonate.

US '425 teaches a composition of human urine and calcium carbonate (see column 3, lines 31-33).

8. Claims 11 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat. No. 5,267,532.

US '532 teaches a cat litter composition that contains calcium carbonate (see column 15, lines 29-30). When the cat uses the litter for urination, the cat litter comprising a composition of calcium carbonate and animal urine.

9. Claims 11 and 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Pat. Appl. No. 51034564

JP '564 teaches a composition that contains animal urine and calcium carbonate (see English abstract).

10. Claims 11-13 and 16-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Pat. No. 6,231,849.

US '849 teaches a composition that contains calcium carbonate and animal urine. The animal urine can be present from 5.0 to 90% of the composition (see claim 17). The calcium carbonate can be present from 0.01% to 98% of the composition (see claims 4 and 13).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claims 11-13, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat. No. 5,043,425.

As discussed above, the reference teaches a composition of animal urine and calcium carbonate. However, the reference does not specifically teach adding the two ingredients together in the amounts claimed by applicant. The amount of a specific ingredient in a composition is clearly a result effective parameter that a person of ordinary skill in the art would routinely optimize. Optimization of parameters is a routine practice that would be obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to employ. It would have been customary for an artisan of ordinary skill to determine the optimal amount of each ingredient to add in order to best achieve the results desired by the reference. Thus, absent some demonstration of unexpected results from the claimed parameters, this optimization of ingredient amount would have been obvious at the time of applicant's invention.

12. Claims 11-13, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 51034564 A.

As discussed above, the reference teaches a composition of animal urine and calcium carbonate. However, the reference does not specifically teach adding the two ingredients together in the amounts claimed by applicant. The amount of a specific ingredient in a composition is clearly a result effective parameter that a person of ordinary skill in the art would routinely optimize. Optimization of parameters is a routine practice that would be obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to employ. It would have been customary for an artisan of ordinary skill to determine the optimal amount of each ingredient to add in order to best achieve the results desired by the reference. Thus, absent some demonstration of unexpected results from

Art Unit: 1654

the claimed parameters, this optimization of ingredient amount would have been obvious at the time of applicant's invention.

13. Claims 11-13, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat. No. 6,231,849.

As discussed above, the reference teaches a composition of animal urine and calcium carbonate. However, the reference does not specifically teach adding the two ingredients together in all of the amounts claimed by applicant. The amount of a specific ingredient in a composition is clearly a result effective parameter that a person of ordinary skill in the art would routinely optimize. Optimization of parameters is a routine practice that would be obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to employ. It would have been customary for an artisan of ordinary skill to determine the optimal amount of each ingredient to add in order to best achieve the results desired by the reference. Thus, absent some demonstration of unexpected results from the claimed parameters, this optimization of ingredient amount would have been obvious at the time of applicant's invention.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Art Unit: 1654

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

14. Claims 11-13 are 16-21 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-15 of U.S. Patent No. 6,149,901.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both the current claims and the claims of US '901 are both drawn to a composition that contains calcium carbonate and animal urine. US '901 discloses the same ingredient amounts as claimed by applicant. Since there is a significant overlap in scope between the two sets of claims, the current claims are not considered to be patentably distinct from the claims of US '901.

15. No claims are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan Coe whose telephone number is (571) 272-0963. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 8:00 to 5:30 and on alternating Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brenda Brumback, can be reached on (571) 272-0961. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.



Susan Coe, Examiner
March 9, 2004